

Together by LightBrigade

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Summary:

Will looking back realized the pictures weren't the defining moments, but rather tried to show the meaning behind them. Will and Mike in love, and always, together.

Together

2054

Will had never had a harder time getting out of bed than he did this morning. Although, getting out of bed would imply that he slept which he hadn't for two days now. He looked at the empty side of the bed and almost started crying again. "Don't" he told himself "you've cried enough." Will knew if Mike was there he'd say something like "It's okay to cry" or, "you're not weak Will, you're the strongest person I know." But that was the problem; Mike wasn't there. Will knew he had to be strong today though. He was dreading going. There would be only a few people there he even knew, only one he was close too, but there would be press. And he wouldn't let them catch him crying. He rolled out of bed feeling numb, and decided to get ready. After finishing everything else, it was time to get dressed. He laid the suit on his bed, black pants, black tie, black jacket. As he buttoned the shirt he couldn't stop his hands from shaking. That had started about a year back but was even worse today. He exited the master bedroom and looked out from the landing, a black limousine waiting. As he made it to the bottom of the staircase a man in black sunglasses approached him.

"Your car is ready Mr. Wheeler."

"Thank you Arnold" Will replied with a small smile he forced onto his face.

As he walked outside another of the men held the door open for him and Will said a small thank you as he climbed in almost starting to cry. The door was always held open for him but only once by the men in the suits before Mike insisted that he do it every time and had not failed to in twenty years. Will always sat on the left side of the backseat and Mike sat on the right. The car was empty today except for two men up front. The empty seat in the car was a void, one Will realized he would have to deal with from now on. He was dreading going. Press taking pictures and people who had only spoken to Mike once invited because "it's what you do." Will felt the car slow and looked up from his lap to see the church in front of them. He saw the people crowded outside and the cameras going off before the car even slowed to a complete stop. Another man opened the door of the

car and Will got out walking briskly into the church as he heard reporters clamoring behind him. he walked into the church and immediately twenty people lined up to greet him offering their condolences and talking about what a great man he was while Will nodded along resisting the urge to slap all of them and then go hide in a corner and cry. Finally, he saw the only person he was looking for and the only one who could come close to understanding his pain. She saw him across the room and gestured for him to follow her into a back room with some privacy. She turned around and pulled Will into a hug. Will felt the barriers he had built up crumble as he sobbed into her shoulder holding her tightly. They pulled away and looked at each other for a moment.

"You look terrible, have you slept at all?"

"I can't El, not without him. I haven't slept a night without him in fifty years."

El looked up and said with tears in her eyes "I can't do another one of these Will, I can't."

Will smiled sadly and said "Don't worry, after this you only have one more left."

El pulled him in for another hug and they both began to cry again. El didn't know how she would deal with it. Apparently another thing that came with her powers was slowed aging, while she wouldn't live forever, she still had at least another couple decades in her. Will was the last person she knew, over the years those closest to her had slowly started to slip away until it was Will and Mike, and now just Will. She had no one else she was close too; the only other people she knew were acquaintances who a person in her position was expected to socialize with.

A man entered the room and said "Mr. Wheeler, Ms. Hopper, it's about to begin." Will thought that was a rather funny way to put it, "beginning" he thought to himself "no, this is the end."

The rest of the afternoon passed in a blur of numbness. Around eight o'clock Will found himself sitting at Mike's desk. He figured in the next few days he'd have to go clean out Mike's other desk, but he couldn't do that right now. He opened the top drawer and saw a

letter With Will written across the front of the envelope in Mike's familiar handwriting.

Will,

My best friend, my lover, my cleric

While afternoons playing D&D are gone, and so are the late nights spent talking softly under the covers, I am not. From the day I asked you to be my friend I have been beside you, and you beside me. Thank you Will, for everything I accomplished, I owe it to you. When others said I couldn't, you said I could when others lost faith, your hope only grew stronger. You are the strongest person I've ever known, so don't let this bring you down. You may not see me now but you will again someday. There have been many, many bumps in the road, but all of them we have overcome together. This one is no different. It's okay to be sad, It's okay to cry a little(I'd be a little offended if you didn't). But I assume you've done enough of that already. Do things my job stopped you from doing. Read a book, catch up on TV, go out to dinner with El. Feel free to redecorate the house and get rid of that chandelier you always hated. I love you Will. I've said enough and we've both said this enough times. I am forever grateful you chose to spend your life with me. I will see you again one day. But for now, I love you.

P.S. I've included some of my favorite photos because I know you won't look through them unless I make you

Will smiled at the letter and pulled out the small stack of photographs enclosed in the envelope.

1984

The Snowball. The first picture ever taken of the entire party. Everyone dressed up, Dustin with his hair that was undeniably a mistake. Will remembered Johnathan behind the camera and Nancy standing next to him saying "smile Mikey!" while trying to contain a laugh. Everyone happy after two years of a nightmare. He remembered being jealous as Mike held El's hand, which he thought was funny now, especially looking back at that night when after everyone else had left, they shared a dance as "friends".

1988

Graduation night. Will remembered the feeling of relief from that evening. He had graduated and could finally leave Hawkins. Will

smiled at the memory of lying spread out on the floor of Mike's basement when they were 10, planning where they would go to college; Indiana University. What Will really remembered from that night though was what he did after he walked across the stage. He remembered sitting on the hood of Mike's car at the quarry, talking softly, and suddenly he was kissing him. It was everything he had wanted to do for years and more. It was Mike.

There were some more pictures after this one, Will and Mike holding hands after they graduated, Mike graduating from law school, some of the party always one or two missing, before he found the one he wanted.

2004

Mike's first victory. It was a picture of Mike standing on top of a table, the bags visible under his eyes, as he gave a speech at 2 A.M., Will's face plastered with a grin visible in the background. Will remembered Mike finally climbing into bed that night around four as he put his arm around Will. "You did it", Will whispered softly, but Mike was already asleep.

2012

Mike's first loss. A picture of Mike walking offstage, Will a step behind him. Mike didn't sleep for a long time that night; he sat on the edge of the bed his head in his hands. Will finally pulled him over placing a kiss on top of his head and wrapping his arms around him. They stayed like that for the rest of the night, both eventually falling asleep.

2015

The wedding. It had been twenty three years since Mike proposed. That day was important, yet changed nothing. When you've loved someone since kindergarten, "I do" doesn't change anything. To other people this made their love valid, some hated them all the same but to Mike and Will, this was just one more battle they had won.

More photographs. Will's first piece in a museum, the party together for the first time in years, and simple things too. Picnics and birthdays sprinkled among the defining moments. But Will realized none of these moments were what mattered, it was what they were trying to show. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but

Will had twenty photos and none of them captured his love for Mike Wheeler. So as Will sat at Mike's desk he realized he had been thinking about them all wrong. They weren't Mike's victories or his own losses. But rather their victories and their losses. It had always been Will and Mike, and Mike and Will. Their stories forever intertwined and the two people inseparable. So as Will lay in bed he realized he would see Mike again, but also, that he was a part of Mike, and that Mike was forever a part of him.